

News Release

Senator Pete V. Domenici

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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DOMENICI: SENATE APPROVES \$20.25 MILLION INCREASE FOR HISPANIC-SERVING INSTITUTIONS

17 New Mexico Schools Qualify for Federal Aid as HSIs

WASHINGTON -- U.S. Senator Pete Domenici today confirmed that the Senate has approved a key funding bill that includes a \$20.2 million increase he requested for the Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSI) program, from which 17 New Mexico schools qualify for funding.

Domenici, a member of the Senate Appropriations Committee, said the Senate Friday approved the **FY2001 Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education (Labor-HHS) Appropriations Bill**, which includes a total of \$62.5 million for HSIs. Domenici will service on the conference committee set to reconcile differences in the Senate and House-passed versions of the bill.

"I am pleased that the Senate has approved this funding for the HSI program, which is so important to learning institutions across New Mexico and the nation," Domenici said. "Quite simply, this program focuses emphasis on providing the best possible opportunities for Hispanic students seeking an education."

The \$62.5 million approved for HSIs represents a 48 percent increase above the current \$42.25 million FY 2000 funding level. This funding, provided under Title V of the Higher Education Act, helps two- and four-year HSI schools develop curricula, purchase books and equipment, renovate and improve facilities, develop faculty, and other activities to strengthen the programs at HSIs.

Domenici is a member of the Senate Hispanic-Serving Institution Coalition, a bipartisan group formed last summer to help focus attention on the needs of Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs), a federal designation that is linked to federal funding resources.

Domenici, as Senate Budget Committee chairman and a member of the Senate Appropriations Committee, has consistently supported greater federal investment in HSIs.

New Mexico has received a total of \$8.8 million in HSI funds since the program's continuing grants began in 1995. Included in that figure were two grants awarded in 1999 totaling \$1.2 million.

There are nearly 24,000 Hispanic college students at the 17 New Mexico colleges and universities, which include: Albuquerque Technical Vocational Institute, College of Santa Fe, College of the Southwest-Hobbs, Eastern New Mexico University-Roswell, Luna Vocational Technical Institute-Las Vegas, New Mexico Highlands University-Las Vegas, New Mexico Junior College-Hobbs, New Mexico State University (NMSU) Las Cruces, NMSU-Carlsbad, NMSU-Doña Ana, NMSU-Grants, Northern New Mexico Community College-Española, Santa Fe Community College, University of New Mexico (UNM)-Los Alamos, UNM-Taos Education Center, UNM-Valencia County Branch, and Western New Mexico University-Silver City.

Nationally, there are about 200 HSIs, schools that have at least 25 percent Hispanic enrollment. They educate more than 600,000, or 42 percent of all Hispanics enrolled in post-secondary education.